

# ***The Evils of Disunion :***

---

20

AN

## **ADDRESS**

DELIVERED AT

**SMITHFIELD, BRADFORD CO., PENN'A.,**

JULY 4, 1861,

BY

**C. L. WARD, ESQ.,**

OF TOWANDA.

---

*Published by order of Committee of Arrangements.*

---

**TOWANDA :**

**PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICE OF THE ARGUS.**

**MDCCCLXI.**

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2017 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

# ADDRESS.

---

FRIENDS, AND FELLOW CITIZENS :—

The task, to which your kindness has summoned me on the present occasion, is not usually an arduous one : for this is a festival of the *heart*, as well as of the head. The glorious memories of this day cluster around us like an atmosphere of light and beauty ;—and the wildest and most joyful impulses of freedom are swelling in every pulsation of the great deep of American hearts. You, who are assembled here, expect from me no cold, or abstruse philosophical disquisition. You came together, chiefly, to unite in a devout thanksgiving for the blessings which our forefathers on this day secured to our common country.

To enumerate some of these blessings, and to hold up in reverence the men, to whom, under God, we are indebted for them—their toils, their sufferings, and ultimate triumph—is the part I have undertaken on this festival of freedom : and though my humble ministrations before the altar of liberty should be tamely and feebly performed, it will not affect the truth of *your* faith, or the fervor of *your* worship.

I am one of those who believe in this primitive and indiscriminate mode of cherishing our national sabbaths. For it is thus we are enabled to cultivate and extend a holy political charity, and create a proper feeling of brotherhood in the cause of human rights. We thus most fitly hold up our common country as our common parent ; and testify that we regard *all* her sons—forgetting elime and class—as our brethren. It is thus, too, that we promote a proper exercise of mutual toleration between all sects and parties. Sects and parties ! Why should we know any such, in this glad season,

when, as I have already said, every true American bosom is thrilling with mingled emotions of pride and patriotism, of joy and gratitude? Of PRIDE, because the event we commemorate, was at once the day-spring and the meridian, the commencement and the consummation of glory to the American character. Of PATRIOTISM, the most elevated and manly, at the contemplation of the wisdom, the valor, the incorruptible integrity, and unbending firmness of the fathers of our Republic. Of GRATITUDE, to the sages who planned, and the heroes who achieved our liberties ; and above all—GRATITUDE, glowing GRATITUDE, to the Gracious Being who smiled upon all their efforts.

The celebration of this Anniversary then, instead of being a matter of mere pleasure and choice, may be enrolled on the catalogue of duties. I will not assert that no man can be a worthy son of the Republic who shrinks from such celebrations ; but I have no hesitation in attempting to prove that he would probably be a better citizen if he mingles in them. By thus communing with his fellow-men in the honors and festivities of this eventful day, his affections would be the more thoroughly purified from the grossness, and more liberally extended beyond the narrow confines of self. He would be roused, profitably roused, from cold indifference, and dangerous languor in regard to public concerns. He would experience an augmentation of both his relish and his thankfulness, for the inestimable blessings and privileges of freedom. His whole soul would be expanded, his heart ennobled, and his conscience rendered more keenly alive to a sense of all his obligations to his country. At the same time, his sense of national honor would be quickened and exalted ; and all his national attachments in every way refined and improved.

To your own personal experience, my friends ;—to the elevated feelings and sentiments, which at this glad moment are thrilling through your veins and rioting in your bosoms, I dare confidently to appeal, for the truth of what I thus assert. But more : it is conceded that the conscientious celebration

of religious festivals contributes to the interests of piety and devotion, and tends to perfect the character of the Christian ; —so does the frequent celebration of national festivals multiply and exalt the civic virtues, and give a higher tone to the character of the patriot. Hence, in every country, whether barbarous or civilized ; and in every age, whether enlightened or ignorant, wherever Patriotism has been known and appreciated—prominent and beneficial public events have been celebrated, as the most effectual method of fanning its holy fires.

Observe the numerous court-appointed festivals in the old world, and its annually recurring festivities—how widely different from ours, in their spirit and tendency ! Look closely into their revels, and lift fearlessly the gaudy robes and glittering tinsel which enshrouds them, and their wildest merriment will be found hollow and heartless all ! Often it is simply a gathering to celebrate the birth-day of some stupid driveller, to whom the factitious circumstance of a royal parentage, gives the hereditary power of playing the tyrant in his turn, over a nation of his (otherwise) equal fellow-men.

The people of this country have always been accustomed to honor the birth-days of their prominent Patriots, in the genuine and elevated spirit of liberty. What true American soul ever entered the festal hall to honor the natal day of Washington, that did not there throb more purely, or yearn with a deeper devotion to the cause of human freedom ? The glorious deeds, the sentiments, and the bright example of our COUNTRY'S FATHER, are models for every American to study and to venerate. And while they still visit his Grave, or glorify the dawn of his birth ;—while they experience fresh regrets at the absence of such a leader, or express renewed admiration of that great and good man who fought for his country, who labored for his country, and whose last wishes were yet for his country—a spirit of similar virtue is preserved, and it invigorates anew the soul of our national existence.

We are taught by our own experience, as well as by the pen

of inspiration, that the patriotic and virtuous dead, through their useful labors and bright example, "yet speak to the living." This sentiment, though promulgated thousands of years since, has the attributes of universality and eternity. Most surely, it is not Abel alone—the accepted worshipper and martyred brother—that speaks to us from all the past: the wide world is filled with the voices of the dead. In the private history of each one of us, do we not find them speaking to us in numberless events and associations? And this, as well in the crowded paths of life or the busy throng of society, as by the secluded fireside, or in the silent chamber. Go where we will, the loved and venerated dead are with us.—Their well-remembered tones mingle with the whispering breeze—the rustling sound of autumn's falling leaf, or the glad music of spring-time. An eloquent writer has well remarked other and more substantial expressions of the presence of the dead: "earth is filled with their enduring labors." Almost all the cherished literature;—the discoveries of science;—the glories of art;—the everlasting temples;—the dwelling-places of generations;—the maxims and opinions of the living;—the institutions of society;—the fabrics of empire—ALL are works of those who have passed away; and by those, *"they who are dead yet speak."*

O, how solemn and impressive in this dark hour of our country's peril, come up to us the voices and example of our departed patriots! Not of WASHINGTON only, but also of the astute and philosophic JEFFERSON; the thoughtful and far-seeing MADISON; the stern, sterling and indomitable JACKSON; the profound and logical WEBSTER; and the kind, persuasive and patriotic HENRY CLAY! To this brilliant category, permit me now, with the tearful eye and swelling heart of friendship, to add—the faithful, fervid, and intrepid DOUGLAS!

I desire not to breathe a syllable here to-day, tinged in the slightest degree with mere party-feeling. The noble example of kindness and conciliation displayed but recently, by the



two great men who a few months since divided the suffrages of a free people for the highest office in their gift—is binding upon every one of us, in view of the common danger which threatens our glorious union ; and least of all, would I seek to disturb the harmony they have inculcated, while standing, as it were, above the new-made grave in which one of them now reposes forever ! Yet I feel I should be false, not only to the highest impulses of friendship, but would be shrinking from an honest freeman's duty, if on this day, while recalling many of the sublime teachings of the sages of our country, I failed to pay a passing tribute to the one, who has been so recently and inopportunately taken from us. To some of us, it seems but yesterday, that we listened to the tones of his clarion voice, as he proclaimed the eternal doctrines of man's right to self-government—the paramount sovereignty of the people, in every organized community. He lived long enough, thank Heaven, to see these principles adopted by even an opposing and triumphant party, and established throughout all our wide-spread domain, and in every state and territory of the land.

I have never been, in any sense, a man-worshipper : indeed, I have often found it difficult to pay even the usual and formal meed of honor and respect to the current creations of popular fancy ; many of whom I knew to have reached their shifting and temporary pedestals of power, by some accidental combination of fortunate circumstances, or by the low arts and trickery of the demagogue. The entry, and the parts played upon the great theatre of human life, by such individuals, however much they might plume themselves as they passed across the public stage, have generally failed to impress me. I could only perceive in such persons, just so many more added to that innumerable multitude, enacting parts in the same grand drama, which is ever changing its features in the progress of time, and dropping in due course in the lowest dust of forgetfulness, the plumed and petted favorites of the hour, scarcely in time in many cases, to enable them to escape the hatred and contempt of their quondam admirers ! But men like those

I have named, who, from the vigor of their intellect, the force of their genius, or the strength of their will, have exercised a deep and powerful influence on their Age and Country—shaping and moulding great events to their own cherished and patriotic purposes—*such* men assume the proportions of the sublimest manhood, and properly become LEADERS OF NATIONS. I but anticipate the inevitable verdict of history, in placing STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS high upon this roll of fame.—With no peculiar advantages at the outset, except those with which nature had endowed him ; born in comparative obscurity, and bowed down by the privations of poverty, he yet elevated himself at last, among the most brilliant intellects of our land. In the fulness of his strength he gave many undoubted proofs that he loved his country and gloried in its freedom ; and in the last trembling accents which fell from his lips, as the rude hand of death closed them forever, he urged a proper and solemn lesson of duty upon his countrymen : “ *Sustain the constitution and be obedient to the laws.*”

But it is time perhaps, that I should turn to the more usual topics of this occasion : This day, fellow citizens, has its sacred and peculiar duties—to some of which I have already incidentally adverted. It should always be a season of reckoning with the present and the future, as well as of comparison with the past. As we summon around us the men and memories of other times, and in their reflected light examine the goodly heritage which has been bequeathed to us, let us make sure that our stewardship is a faithful one, both to ourselves and to posterity. Let us see if we are likely to transmit this noble trust to *our* children in turn, unstained in its purity, undiminished in extent, and unfaded in its glory. Some eighty-five years only, have flown by, since yon bright banner\* was first given to the grateful breezes of an infant and struggling Republic. It has always been proudly upheld in every battle-field where it was lifted, and been recognized and respected on every sea : still, it becomes us to inquire if it yet

---

\*The stars and stripes.



floats as purely as when it first became the flag of freedom ; —if none its stars are dimmed—none its stripes tarnished, and above all, to ascertain if the hearts which now beat around it, are as fiercely free, as those who first swore to live or die beneath its folds.

It is an obvious fact, that we have outwardly and physically prospered, in a degree unparalleled in the history of any other country. There are those yet living, within whose memory we sprang into a national existence—a scattered people, without capital, without credit ; possessing a meagre agriculture, and with a still more depressed system of manufactures ;—while our commerce was struggling under restrictions which then bound this whole Continent and the adjacent islands in a state of colonial vassalage to the paternal states in Europe. Over the green hills where we are now assembled, and where we now find all the arts and luxuries that accompany the highest stage of human refinement—scarce half a century since, the savage of the wilderness roamed in sullen and solitary pride ! The roof-tree which sheltered Queen Esther and her dusky handmaids in yonder valley† has scarcely crumbled from the view ;—and some of you almost remember when the first hardy settlers of these regions were termed a border people ! Where are the borders of American civilization now ? Over the rugged Alleghanies—still onward, the torrent of busy life has rolled, until the once almost fabulous Rocky Mountain barrier has been passed, and the tide has reached at length the country but lately described by the poet,

as

———“ the continuous woods,  
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound.  
Save his own dashing.”

Other sounds are breaking upon those shores now ! American enterprise is there—as it is everywhere on this Continent, with its capital, its energy and its skill ;—and has been busy weaving fairy-like enchantments over most of the intermediate

---

†Catharine Montour or Queen Esther, as she was usually called, resided for a time in Upper Ulster, Bradford County. Her strange and romantic history remains unwritten.

space. To natural advantages, our long, branching rivers, with fathomless channels ; our wide-spread lakes and spacious bays,—have been added artificial ligaments, rail-roads, canals, and telegraphs : and these, hourly extending, have fastened together all parts of our broad Union in bonds inevitable, as we have always hoped they would be, indissoluble.

Our country now stretches Southward beyond the Equatorial line, and Northward to the Arctic circle : practically speaking—"the whole boundless Continent is ours." Cities are springing up and spreading out on our Pacific, as well as on our Atlantic coast ; and natural and reciprocal markets have been formed upon each, for all the varied productions of the intervening regions. These great American marts, thus lying midway between two old and populous Continents, require only to be properly connected by suitable highways—(superseding a costly, distant, and dangerous sea voyage,)—when they would attract the rich commerce of Africa and Europe from one direction, and of China, the East Indies, and the rising communities of the Southern ocean from another.

With a position so favorable, and resources so boundless ; controlled by the sagacious intellect and eager industry of our people, how soon would it be in our power to take the proud place of the mother country, as the arbiter of commerce and mistress of the sea ! But this is not all, nor the best we might hope to become : we might soon exert a great moral, as well as political influence on the grand theatre of human life. Already have the beacon-fires of liberty shed their quickening beams upon the few elements of expiring civilization in Asia : at last, Japan is opened to commercial enterprise by American agency ; and emigration from beyond the walls of China has been swelling the already populous regions of Eastern California ; so that even the disciples of Confucius, the subjects of the illustrious Emperor who boasts of being cousin to the Sun and Moon, are quietly sitting down to enjoy the countless blessings of plain, republican institutions ! Carrying out in thought, and in reasonable hope, the

natural results of these facts, we see shadowed forth in the dim distance, *the regeneration and re-union of human society throughout the world, by American agency, and the benign influence of American example!*

The basis of calculation established by past experience, will give us a population of eighty millions, in thirty years to come; and of one hundred millions ere the close of the present century! But to my apprehension, the real strength and value of this great country consists in the vital interest which *each individual really has in the permanency of our institutions*. Break up, or destroy these institutions, as sanctified by the blood of the Revolution, they have been transmitted down for our use, and every one of us loses the beneficial protection and equality of privilege which they secure, alike to the richest and the poorest, the highest and the humblest in the land!

I have thus endeavored to exhibit the sources of the national prosperity, in which we rioted, as it were, only a few months since, as consisting in the freedom of our country; the industry and intelligence of our people; our limitless resources, and our manifest advantages of commercial intercourse with a divided and warring world. But there is yet another element of our happiness and prosperity as a nation, which is far more potent than all these: it is the advantage or encouragement afforded by the idea of strength and permanence, resulting from *a steadfast UNION of these powerful states, under an adequate and stable government*. To this, and the virtue of our people, under the blessing of Heaven, are we more indebted than to every other circumstance or relation. Take from us all else beside; steep us in poverty to the very lips; let our soil be made barren, and our sky be perpetually overcast; cripple all the wings of our wide-spread commerce, and crowd our borders with an armed foe; still, united and virtuous, we might laugh the world to scorn!

But on the contrary—break the bonds of our glorious po-

litical fabric in twain, and all our proud privileges and distinctions as a nation will perish beneath its ruins! *Let the Union be lost*, and ALL IS LOST! Industry would then lose its incentive and stand appalled; our commercial marine would moulder and decay at our desolate wharves; the busy hum of the shuttle would subside in our factories; the fires in our forges and furnaces would pale, and many a plough be stayed in its furrow. Poverty and famine would stalk abroad throughout the land; and violence and crime would dog their footsteps. Then, to fill up the measure of our country's wretchedness, war, CIVIL WAR—the most sanguine and brutal under Heaven, would be let loose, its tiger-tooth dripping with the best blood of our citizens. The smoke of destruction would hang over our cities, as over the doomed cities of the past; and the wild shouts of rage, and the shrieks of madness and despair go up from our depopulated vallies! When all these accumulated horrors terminated, it would, naturally, if not inevitably, be, in the sad sullenness of despotism; in the silent darkness of slavery, under some daring military despot, whom perhaps an army of our own sons and brothers had placed in dominion over the ruins of the Republic! The clank of fetters would ring, where we were wont to hear the glad songs of freedom; and the darkest and most loathsome shade of infamy would brood over the land of Washington!

This gloomy picture of disunion and its fatal fruits, my friends, is not the exhalament of an excited imagination, or a distempered fancy. I wish to Heaven it *were* such; and *only* such. But no: they are simply the scenes, in their full maturity, which are now beginning to break upon our view in several of the Southern States of this Union. Each morning's gleaming sunlight brings new revelations of these dark and dreadful shadows, rising up one after another, in grim and ghastly array. Every breeze from the South comes to us laden with the din of arms, and the clangor of battle; of BATTLE, between brothers of the same lineage, and sharing the

same goodly heritage left by patriotic fathers; of *BATTLE, waged even on the giddy heights of our nation's unexampled prosperity and happiness!*

And why is this? I will give, what I apprehend to be the true answer to this question, fearlessly and frankly. This is no time for any thing but bold, honest words and works. I reply, then—these impending horrors are the mingled results of a heated, pragmatismal fanaticism on the one hand, and of unchastened and overweening ambition, culminating in open treason, on the other. In regard to the course of the Southern leaders of this *rebellion*, (for such in truth, it is,) I have nothing left to offer, either in defence or palliation. For years past, many of you have heard me plead earnestly and again, the cause of the South, as against the mad clamors of abolitionism. In regard to their system of servitude, I have said always, as I contend even now, that it should be left where our Fathers left it by the Constitution—to the consciences of the people of the several states, and of the organized territories, to be regulated by local law. Having abolished African servitude ourselves—if the system be a sin, we have not to answer for it; if an evil, we suffer not under it. But, whatever may have been the various theories upon this question, as held by individual members of the political party which presented Abraham Lincoln for the Presidency—the South has no just ground of complaint in the premises. Three new territories have been admitted into the Union as States, since his advent to power, without any invidious restriction whatever: and as far as I have observed, the public laws have all been faithfully enforced.

The doctrine, now sought to be carried out, that a state has a right to secede and break up the Union at will, is every way absurd and untenable. There stands the plain, written Compact of our fathers: to that compact after due deliberation, and after having fairly tried a less tenacious ligament of union, they solemnly subscribed, and so bound their sons. Its bless-



ings and its benefits have been seen and felt throughout long years of peace and boundless prosperity. The only honest and legitimate mode of changing any of its conditions, is pointed out with the utmost clearness, in the noble instrument itself. Those, then—come they from North or South, who openly refuse, or covertly neglect to comply with any of its behests, not only dishonor the manes and memory of their fathers, but are guilty of striking at the most beneficent form of government on the face of the earth.

The path of the upright American patriot in the present crisis, is as clearly open before him, as if traced with sunbeams. He should adhere faithfully to all the compromises and concessions—all the principles and provisions of the Constitution.

To the innumerable evils I have already adverted to, as following in the train of a divided confederacy, we may add, a meagre, local traffic; a flag unknown and unrespected on the seas; domestic sedition and intestine broils, mocking the headlong violence of the seceding States themselves; a comparatively feeble army, yet with increasing conflict, all around and within our borders! O, who *can* be so weak or wicked, as to hazard all these evils, that now beholds floating above his head, those glorious old stars and stripes, which have always compelled respect throughout the world; who finds peace and social order at home, secured equally to the whole Union, by an irresistible power; who, I say—seeing and feeling all this, and more in its favor, will not cling with unfaltering devotion, to the common hopes, the common flag, and common destiny of the American Union?

Divide this magnificent country! How, and by what line? Not, surely, by the dark, demarkation of Slavery, an institution of man's selfishness, of disputed moral right, and of still more questionable expediency in a political point of view! The Great Architect of the Universe, made this continent one and indivisible;—planted its broad lakes;—reared its massive, rock-ribbed mountains;—and traced the paths of its noble rivers,



throughout their branches, and long, sinuous courses to the sea. Who then, shall impiously and unnaturally dare to separate into jealous and warring sections, what has thus been joined together by the hand of Omnipotence itself, as it were. Observe, (as illustrative of the absurdity of such an attempt,) lying almost in the centre of the limits our country—that vast inland basin, termed the Valley of the Mississippi, stretching away along the 42nd parallel of North Latitude, as it runs out upon the Pacific Ocean: this great valley contains within reach of its drainage, more than a million of square miles of rich feasible land; and is capable of rearing, and *will* probably rear in time, more than FIFTY larger states than old Massachusetts, and of sustaining a population, THRICE FIFTY times greater than hers is at present! Now, the Mississippi river, the main outlet of this wonderful region, (draining some thirteen of the American States, as at present organized)—pours its hundred feet depth of water into the Gulf of Mexico through the swamps of Louisiana. Who, so visionary as to imagine, that little swarthy, swampy Louisiana, even if backed by a dozen, cotton-lined, fifth-rate, Slaveholding States, will ever be allowed to hold the lock and key to one of the largest and longest rivers in the world, letting in and out whoever she, or her cotton coadjutors may fancy, and upon such terms! The idea is as preposterous, as the one for a time entertained by a sectional diplomatist, who actually talked of yielding the joint right of navigating this world-way of commerce to a foreign power, in consideration of a codfish annuity, deliverable in the Atlantic, or on the shallows of Newfoundland!

Who would sever Freedom's shrine?  
 Who would draw the invidious line?—  
 Though by birth *one* spot be mine.  
 Dear is all the rest;—  
 Dear to me the South's fair land,  
 Dear the Central mountain band,  
 Dear New England's rocky strand,  
 Dear the prairied West.

Divide this glorious country! Reason forbids the idea;—nature has rendered it impossible;—religion interposes; and patriotism sternly condemns the effort. No, fellow citizens—a thousand times, NO—should be our response. On this proud and memorable day of our national birth;—blest with all that is requisite to the

happiness of a free people ;—with a destiny in our reach more brilliant than that of any other portion of the world—let us one, and all, without reservation or restraint, re-echo from our inmost hearts, that noble sentiment of the immortal Jackson, uttered to the same men, and under very similar circumstances—“*Our Union must, and SHALL be preserved !*” Aye, PRESERVED, even if it involve anew, as it involved in times of old, (when our fathers secured the right to form it)—a *Baptism of blood, or a Martyrdom of fire !*

By our altars, pure and free,  
By our Law's deep-rooted tree,  
By the past's dread memory,  
By our WASHINGTON !  
By our common parent tongue,  
By our hopes, bright, buoyant, young,  
By the tie of country strong,  
*We will still be ONE !*

War's fiercest conflicts are impending: strong hands and brave hearts are gathering in the field of strife. And true, ever, to her blessed mission on earth—gentle woman too, is taking *her* place, ready to soothe and nurse the sufferers ! When, since creation's dawn—tell me when, in the cause of freedom or humanity, woman's heart was cold, or woman's hand was idle ? But I will not detain you longer at this time Fellow Citizens, with the thrilling themes and important lessons which crowd themselves upon the mind on this inspiring festival. With commending you, one and all, to the smiles of that Gracious Being, who has so long showered his blessings upon our land—and earnestly praying, there may come to you and yours, very many, and much happier returns of this sacred day, I conclude the duty, with which your Committee honored me. We may never all of us meet again on earth, but wherever any future Anniversary of our country's freedom may find us—O, may it find us fervently devoted in heart and spirit, to the plainest duty and best hope of American freemen—the *maintenance of the Constitution of our fathers, and the Union it cements.*